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Faust, von Goethe. Mit Einleitung u. fortlaufender Erklärung, herausgegeben von K. I. SCHRÖER. Heilbronn: Henninger. Erster Theil (1881), pp. lxxxvi, 303; Zweiter Theil (1881), pp. cii, 442.

It would be damning Schröer's work with faint praise to call it the *best* edition of *Faust*. It is the *only* edition that aims at explaining the poem from beginning to end in a spirit of scholarly accuracy and generous fullness. Within the narrow limits of this notice I cannot attempt to do justice to Schröer's labors; I can only call attention to them, and proffer one or two criticisms of a general nature.

The mere fullness of the running commentary (printed at the bottom of the text page) is as gratifying as it is surprising. The editor is justified—from his point of view—in boasting, p. v of the Preface to the First Part, *dass keiner Schwierigkeit ausgewichen ist*. From his point of view, I say. Having made daily use of the commentary for months, I can testify most cheerfully to his honesty in not “dodging,” as we say, a knotty point. But has he *detected* every lurking difficulty? Most emphatically not. Even in the First Part, which is in the main comparatively easy, there are several passages which call for more light. *E. g.* in speaking of the scene in Auerbach's Cellar, p. 121, Schröer says: The company consists of students of the roughest (*rohest*) sort. This is the traditional view. But is it correct? To me, Frosch, Brander, etc., are not students at all, but Philistines. They have not a trace of student-nature, neither in their notions nor in their deportment. Besides, every editor seems to have overlooked the circumstance that Faust has formally turned his back upon university life; the very last words that Mephistopheles pronounces in the scene immediately preceding this one are: I congratulate you upon your *new* career. Surely Goethe would not start Faust on his new career by introducing him to a student-carouse! There is still too much of the conventional in Goethe-criticism. In the Second Part the difficulties multiply. Goethe has taxed the resources of the language to their utmost; every page abounds in delicate shades of meaning, in allusions hinted rather than expressed, and in *Gedankensprünge*. For most of these Schröer has a satisfactory, or at least a plausible interpretation. But not a few of them have wholly escaped his observation, he is not even aware of their existence. How may we account for this? The following explanation suggests itself. The Second Part is not studied, *i. e.* read and interpreted, line by line, as the First Part is. Those who take it up at all read it rapidly and with an eye to the general effect. Undoubtedly Schröer, no less than Düntzer, v. Loeper, and a few other scholars, has read and interpreted to *himself* every line of the Second Part. But has he interpreted every line to some young pupil quick to feel the least break in thought or in syntax and satisfied only with a direct explanation? This is work of a very different order; it is a test that sifts one's knowledge most pitilessly. I write from experience on the point, for I am now engaged in translating and analysing the Second Part with a special pupil who has selected the *Faust* for a graduation-thesis, and I know better than ever before what it means to interpret Goethe. Were Schröer to listen to some of these class-room discussions, he would be surprised to see how much he has taken for granted. In truth, until the entire *Faust* has been used as a text-book by at least one generation of select classes, we may be permitted to doubt our getting a perfectly adequate

commentary. Yet, despite an occasional shortcoming, Schröer's commentary is a storehouse of valuable material, arranged in admirable shape. The briefest inspection will satisfy every one that it is the result of years of patient labor. It only remains to add in this connection that each Part has an alphabetical index to the notes and literary references; this index serves the purpose of a partial concordance. The verse-numbering is too complicated. Schröer has attempted in the First Part to preserve v. Loeper's numbering uncorrected, also corrected by five lines, and his own numbering. In the Second Part we have one continuous count including the First Part, another continuous count beginning with the Second Part, and a third count separate for each Act. It seems to me that there is but one way of numbering, viz. to regard the poem, both Parts, as a whole, and to count from beginning to end. The total is only 12,110; considerably less than Wace's *Brut*, 15,300, or Layamon 16,120 (full lines). It is surprising that advocates of the "unity" of *Faust*, like Schröer and v. Loeper, should forego the use of so helpful an ally as continuous numbering.

The present is no place for discussing Schröer's position in the great Faust question. Enough to say that he is a firm believer in the "unity" of the poem; to him the Second Part is no mere after-thought, the capricious expression of declining powers, but rather the mature and well-weighed fulfilment of a purpose, and even of a plan, which Goethe had formed in his youth and which he never lost sight of. There can be no doubt but that this opinion is now in the ascendancy, and will eventually prevail to the exclusion of all others. Again, Schröer is no friend of the so-called "aesthetic" school. He is not willing to let Goethe be judged by the conventional standards of critics like Vischer, who are bent upon forcing the facts of art into their theories. A great genius like Goethe is not to be gauged and valued by what we think he ought to have said. If he has anything to say, we can well afford to listen, no matter whether we can make it fit into our *Schablone* or not. And to understand Goethe there is only one way: to discover the concrete situation, the *Bild* from which he started. For Goethe is not the poet who embodies abstract thoughts, but the poet whose thoughts evolve themselves from the situations supplied by his actual experience or the images created by his imagination.

Among the novelties brought forward by Schröer these two are the most striking: first, the direct connection of the first appearance of Mephistopheles at the emperor's court and the conjuration of Helena with two poems by Hans Sachs. This discovery may eventually lead to others in the growth of the Faust legend, and possibly throw some light on the sources of Marlowe's *Faustus*. The other is the hint thrown out, p. xxvi of the Introduction to the Second Part, that it was not Goethe's original intention to make two parts of the poem, that the appearance of Helena was included in his first plan, but that she was thrust into the background by Gretchen. Schröer's words, rather freely rendered, run thus: "It seems to me that there are still evident traces in the First Part of Helena's being supplanted by Gretchen. The mood (*Stimmung*) of the young Goethe, that mood which originated Goetz v. Berlichingen and Egmont's Clärchen, will explain to us how his interest in the classic heroine was of necessity abated by the more human interest he felt in the charm of Gretchen's simplicity. Mephistopheles was to show Helena to Faust in the magic mirror, and to intensify his longing for her by means of the

magic potion, and this is still discernible in the scene in the Witch's Kitchen, written much later than the first inception (written at Rome in 1788). But Faust is not seized with longing for Helena. He sees Gretchen, and Helena is forgotten. He is magnetically attracted by all that is charming in the innocence and naïveté of German womanhood. And he, that is the poet, cannot shake off this spell. The deep passion, the hearty love of Faust and Gretchen must run its course—her bliss, her fall, her guilt, her ruin. By the side of all this there is no room for Helena. The Gretchen-tragedy was no premeditated plan, it carried the poet along irresistibly, and became an independent story by itself. Hence the necessity of a Second Part, the original object of the Faust-drama being still unattained."

Such an observation can be made only by one who has studied the poem long and lovingly. At first startling, it commends itself more and more the oftener it is pondered. It adjusts the two parts of the poem better than has been possible hitherto, and it is in keeping with all that we know of Goethe's life and manner of composition.

J. M. HART.

De Euripideorum Prologorum Arte et Interpolatione. SCR. J. KLINKENBERG.  
Bonn, 1881.

This little book, which has received one of the annual prizes of the University of Bonn, deserves to be studied with the same patience and candor with which it has been written. When the history of modern philological research comes to be written, Euripidean study in the last six score years will come in for an interesting chapter. A good deal has been learned since Samuel Musgrave had his *Exercitationes in Euripidem* printed at Leyden; and very simple-minded do some of the enthusiastic young physician's observations seem to us now. The greatest gains have been made, of course, in the line of more rigorous analysis of the language and better sifting of the diplomatic material; but these are not the only gains. That Euripides as well as other ancient authors had suffered from the defiling hands of interpolators had been known for centuries, but it was Valckenaer who first felt the duty of paying conscientious heed to this fact in editing the text, who first wrote, clearly and sharply: *nam hos ne audiendos quidem arbitror, nedum refutandos, qui dura quaevis atque absurda quidquam esse causae negabunt cur non imputarentur Euripidi*. A very long step toward a just appreciation of the value of the received texts was taken when Boeckh's discussion of the famous law of Lycurgus made it seem most probable that for more than two thousand years the standard editions of all the Greek tragic poets have been but copies of stage-copies. Since then scholars have had more and more in mind the many curious facts which the old commentators have left us about the ways of antique theatrical companies in dealing with their lines; and it is now hardly open to any one, however much inclined to do so, to be ignorant of or ignore the external evidence that the plays of Euripides, especially, have suffered considerable interpolations. And few men who have at their command the necessary sympathy with Euripides and his art, and read his existing plays reflectively, say three or four times through, will be disposed to question the importance of this external evidence. The